



Cormac Devlin TD
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

17th February 2021

PQ 5550/21

“To ask the Minister for Health the status of the roll-out of the multidisciplinary teams for diabetic foot; the number of staff employed in each team by region in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Cormac Devlin”

Dear Deputy Devlin,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 5550/21), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

Limb loss is one of the most devastating complications of diabetes and represents an enormous burden on individuals, their families and on the health and social care system in general. Reducing the number of diabetes-related amputations is a major goal of the National Clinical Programme for Diabetes.

Multidisciplinary working is a key element of delivering high quality care to complex diabetic foot patients. The National Clinical Programme for Diabetes is aware of this and is working closely with Vascular Surgeons, Orthopaedic Surgeons, Orthotists, Tissue Viability Nurses and other specialist groups involved in managing these complex patients. The National Clinical Programme for Diabetes sees podiatrists as the cornerstone of the multidisciplinary team in managing the diabetic foot.

Over the past number of years, the HSE has appointed 31 new diabetes podiatrists. The first 22 of these posts were appointed in the acute (hospital) setting with a focus on dealing with the management of patients with active foot disease. The National Clinical Programme for Diabetes is aware of many examples of excellent multidisciplinary care pathways that have been put in place around these new hospital podiatry appointments with local audits demonstrating improved decision making and reduction in length of stay for complex diabetic foot patients. The most recent HSE diabetes podiatry appointments (9 WTE) have been made in primary care. These community based podiatrists provide care to patients at risk of future ulceration or limb loss.

The National Clinical Programme for Diabetes is in the process of updating the Model of Care for the Diabetic Foot (2011) with a view to clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the various members of the Multidisciplinary team involved in managing patients with (or at risk for) foot ulceration. The update to the Model of Care will be emphasising the importance of joined up working across primary, secondary and tertiary care with clarification of referral pathways between the different sectors.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'TJ Dunford', is centered on a light gray background.

TJ Dunford

Head of Operations; Primary Care.
Community Operations.